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Urban District of Woodhall Spa

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1956



WOODHILL SPA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report
of the
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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

Medical Officer of Health

S.A. O'HIGAN, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector

N.J. ARNEY, A.I.A.S., M.S.I.A.
(Resigned May 1957)

D.A. NORMAN, M.A.P.H.I.
(Appointed July, 1957.)

The Highways, Sewerage and Public Health Committees deal with the majority of Public Health Matters although a separate Water Committee and Parks and Playing Fields Committee deal with water supplies and swimming baths.
All members of the Council sit on all Committees.



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The Council of the Urban District of Woodhall Spa

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1956.

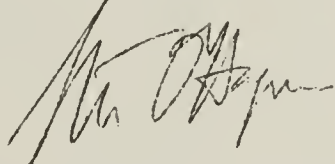
This report does not differ in style from recent issues but retrospectively the work of five years may be more obvious than that of one and some comparisons have been made over relatively long terms and thus in some measure compensate for chance errors in statistics which are otherwise inevitable in a small district.

The Sanitary Inspector is no more, and the long respected title has been officially changed to the more ponderous one of Public Health Inspector. Inasmuch as it emphasizes to the Public that it is their health which is his prime concern and that the Surveyor part of the appointment is necessarily integrated only as far as it concerns Public Health, this is good.

The year commenced with this appointment vacant and I have barely welcomed Mr. Arney to the post when I have now to record farewell thanks to him and welcome Mr. Norman.

At present, the seasonal polio 'scare' is starting, although Woodhall Spa has escaped. Parents may feel reassured, however, that polio is nothing like the serious danger that the roads present, so that if they are not unduly worried by road dangers, there is still less need to be worried about polio.

I am, Sirs,
Your obedient Servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS

Area of Urban District:	1874 acres
Registrar General's Mid-Year Estimate of Resident Population:	2160
Density of Population:	1.152 persons per acre
Number of Inhabited Dwellings:	694
Houses	51
Flats	
Temporary Dwellings, Caravans etc	3
Rateable Value of Urban District:	£23,520.
Sum Represented by Penny Rate:	£90. 13. 6.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Live Births		
Legitimate	Male	18
	Female	<u>6</u>
		24
Illegitimate	Male	0
	Female	<u>0</u>
		<u>0</u>

Crude live birth rate per thousand
estimated population 11.1

Standardized live birth rate per
thousand estimated population 14.7

Live birth rate, England & Wales 15.7

There were 3 still-births during the year

But for the unfortunate loss of 3 out of 27 babies during the year, by still-birth, the standardized birth rate would not have suffered the sharp blow.

DEATHS

Male 25
Female 23

48

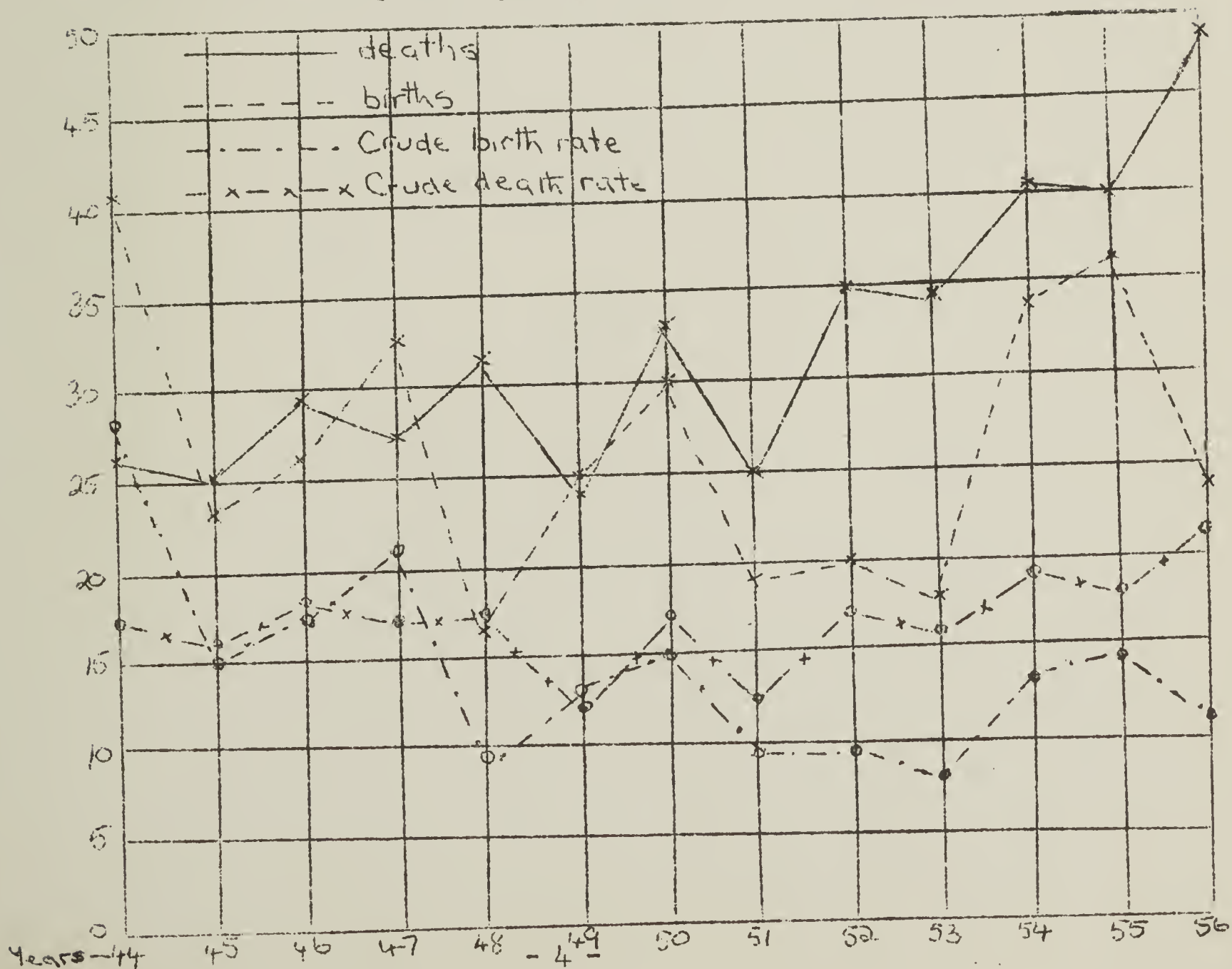
Crude death rate per thousand estimated population 22.1

Standardized death rate per thousand estimated population 14.0

Death Rate, England and Wales per thousand estimated population 11.7

It will be appreciated from my comment that 24% of Woodhall people were in 1955 over 60 years of age, that it unreasonable to expect the unstandardized death rate to remain similar to that of England and Wales.

The graph below shows what has been happening in matters of birth and death over the past 13 years.



Essentially in the post-war period there was a fall in births and the post-war peak did not apply to Woodhall as to elsewhere. Since 1948, however the crude birth rate has been substantially steady and the wider fluctuations in the number of births per year has reflected movement of young adults into and out of the Spa with, probably, the current tendency to space children more or less two or three years apart

Since 1951 the tide of death has been rising although the death rate shows this to be largely due to increased population. Nevertheless, if the increased deaths require burials in Woodhall Spa then an active programme of cemetery extension will be needed.

Causes of Death as shown in the Registrar General's short list

Short List No.	Cause of Death	Male	Female	Total
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	0	0	0
2.	Tuberculosis, other	0	0	0
3.	Syphilitic disease	0	0	0
4.	Diphtheria	0	0	0
5.	Whooping Cough	0	0	0
6.	Meningococcal infection	0	0	0
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0	0
8.	Measles	0	0	0
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	0	0	0
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	1	0	1
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	0	0	0
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	0	0	0
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	0	0	0
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic Neoplasms	3	2	5
15.	Leukaemia, aleukemia	0	0	0
16.	Diabetes	0	0	0
17.	Vascular Lesions of nervous system	3	3	6
18.	Coronary disease, angina	3	2	5
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	0	2	2
20.	Other heart disease	5	5	10
21.	Other circulatory disease	1	2	3
22.	Influenza	0	0	0
23.	Pneumonia	4	1	5
24.	Bronchitis	0	0	0
25.	Other Diseases of Respiratory system	0	0	0
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	0	1
27.	Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	0	0	0
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	0	0	0
29.	Hyperplasia of Prostrate	0	0	0
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0	0
31.	Congenital malformations	0	0	0
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	4	5
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	0	0	0
34.	All other accidents	2	1	3
35.	Suicide	1	0	1
36.	Homicide and operations of war	0	0	0
		25	22	47

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Notifications of infectious diseases during the year were as follows:-

Pneumonia	10	(8 over 70 years of age)
Whooping Cough	5	
Dysentery	2	
Scarlet Fever	5	

There were no notifications of measles during the year.

Vaccination and Immunization

The accompanying table shows the improvement in the rate of protection of the children, together with evidence of the completeness of the change-over to combined diphtheria and whooping cough vaccine.

	1954	1955	1956
Initial Diphtheria	20	0	0
Initial Whooping Cough	27	4	0
Combined vaccine	2	23	23
Smallpox - Vaccinations	15	13	20
Revaccinations	4	13	5
Births during the year	29	31	24
" " preceding year	18	29	31

The figures for births in each preceding and current year give some idea of the number of children at the optimum age for vaccination and immunization, but it could be fallacious to attempt to present "percentage protected" on so small a total of eligibles.

Poliomyelitis Vaccination

During 1956 the public were uncertain of their reaction to vaccination after the American mishap and the British scheme was launched very cautiously, taking the utmost care to avoid any possible cause for reproach.

The only ill effects observed were occasional faints due to emotional upsets; this in turn being primarily due to indecisiveness and anxiety on the part of the parents.

Since then, however, the public opinion has crystallized and the general question is now no longer "whether?" but "how long must I wait?"

The cost to the nation of protecting its children must be high but I doubt whether it would compare even financially with the burden of maintaining wholly or partly the paralysed victims the disease has already claimed.

Tuberculosis

Lindsey County Council has just undertaken the task of active attack on tuberculosis by B.C.G. Vaccination. This is most desirable at 13 years of age and has been practiced in most other modern nations for many years, with very satisfactory results, and for some years the direct child contacts of infectious cases have been vaccinated by the chest physicians.

The time is ripe, however, to extend the offer to that group who have always been at greatest risk - the adolescents. Information is being sent to all parents of 13 year old children, together with forms of consent to the necessary skin test and vaccination of those who are found to have no natural resistance to the disease.

As with all provisions of this nature, the decision whether or not to accept either testing or vaccination must be left to the individual parents who will, of course, be able to consult both their own doctors and the School Medical Officer on the matter.

Food Poisoning etc.

No case of food poisoning was notified and although the communities of Horncastle and Coningsby were badly affected by Sonne Dysentery only two cases were reported in Woodhall Spa.

The fact that the older Woodhall Spa children were at school in Horncastle and Gartree Schools apparently did not cause them either to become affected themselves or to become carriers.

Nevertheless, for several months anxiety remained for, had the disease become established in the younger groups it would have been as difficult to eradicate in Woodhall as in other areas.

Notional Health Service.

This remains unchanged from 1955, as also are the health services of Lindsey County Council.

The following table of Clinics is also unchanged from 1955:-

Clinic	Day and Time	Place	Attendance
INFANT WELFARE	2nd & 4th week Wednesday at 10 a.m.	WOODHALL SPA	CASUAL
INFANT WELFARE	1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday at 2 p.m.	Horncastle	Casual
ANTE-NATAL	1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday at 10 a.m.	Horncastle	Casual
Ophthalmic } Orthopaedic } Dental }	By appointment		

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE URBAN DISTRICT

Water Supply

Throughout 1956 the Waterworks operated by the U.D.C. remained adequate in quantity and quality and sold a surplus averaging 40,000 gallons per day to the Horncastle Rural District Council.

Interconnection with Horncastle Rural Council's supply and Boston Corporation and Horncastle Water Coy. supply can all be effected so that there is little risk remaining of a water shortage.

The increased storage on the Woodhall Waterworks site gave valuable assistance throughout.

The Waterworks Engineer has developed an instrument for descaling the iron mains in fairly long sections without removing them. At the end of the year this had been used to very good effect on a trial section of main and it appears that its continued use will result in considerable saving of money and labour.

The worst sections of main are to be treated systematically and it now expected that relaying on a big scale will be deferred for many years.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

An extensive Scheme of improvement to the Sewage Works was commenced during 1956, involving a new deep sewer laid cross country from the centre of Woodhall to a deep ejector on the Works, raising the effluent from the sewer some forty feet to the level of the screens and settlement tanks. A new large aeration bed is incorporated, together with humus settling tanks, and the ultimate effluent should attain a normal standard of purity.

Refuse Collection

Collection has been satisfactory during the year, despite the continued extra burden of removing and destroying combustible materials such as wrappings and packings, vegetable waste, etc.

These materials are most offensive in dustbins, attract flies and considerably increase the cost of collection. Most of this filth has to be raked out of the refuse and separately burned. This is necessary because of difficulty in controlling tipping and providing the necessary two feet of earth to protect from flies and vermin. On low lying land, however, ordinary practices are difficult and the compromise is reasonably satisfactory.

It would however, be better to concentrate refuse destruction in a simple incinerator rather than open fires, even though a full scale incinerator for all refuse is hardly practicable.

The Swimming Pool

No new situation has arisen, but the filtration plant is definitely overloaded when a good day causes a heavy use. Filtration and chlorination is regarded as adequate if a complete turnover of the water occurs every 6 hours. With the existing plant, however, it takes some 15 or 16 hours for a theoretically complete change over.

Some reduction in the degree of pollution would result if

- (a) all bathers are required to have a shower before entering the pool, preferably using soap and warm water; and
- (b) the paving at the edges of the pool were cambered away from the pool to avoid rain and water dripping from these bathers on the sides from washing soil into the pool.

These two measures would not be unduly expensive and could contribute considerably to reducing the chlorine demand of the water.

It is further probable that more efficient distribution of chlorine would result from the diversion of some or all of the water aeration cascade to two or more jets discharging into the bath with enough force to create some turbulence. It is common practice to combine this with forcible aeration of the filtered water.

There is still no swimmer in attendance for life saving.

Food & Drugs Act, 1955

Meat Products:

Only comparatively small quantities of sausages are made at Woodhall and the Contravention of the Food and Drugs Act regulations was a purely technical one, not likely to affect the Public Health.

Ice Cream:

Sampling, although inadequate, gave good results as far as it went and there is no reason from inspection of the storage equipment to expect other than Class I results unless there has been a power failure of exceptional duration.

In the case of Food Premises generally the conduct of the staff and the practice of their trade is excellent. Contraventions of regulations consisted in the main of insufficient washing facilities and these were in the main, remedied as soon as plumbers could do the work. At the end of the year only two premises had their improvements unfinished.

It is evident that there is a general willingness to comply with the law and the Public Health Inspector and myself found our task was not to enforce the regulations but to advise on the best way to ensure compliance.

Housing:

No new houses were built by the Local Authority and none are contemplated.

One case of an unfit house was represented to the Council but no action was taken thereon.

It will be recalled that the census in 1951 showed 44 families, including 108 persons without a separate home. Since then the U.D.C. has built 37 houses, other authorities 13 and private persons 32 whilst the population in 1951 was 1671 and is now estimated as 2160.

Not much interest has been aroused by the scheme for Housing improvement grants and I am doubtful whether the older properties have improved since the Census.

REPORT OF WORK DONE BY PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR DURING THE YEAR

HOUSING:

Total number of houses erected during the year:-

(1) by local authority	-
(2) by other local authorities	-
(3) by other bodies or persons	9

Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954:-

(i) number of houses scheduled for demolition but retained by formal action under Sec.2,3,4 or 6.	Nil
(ii) number of certificates of disrepair issued	None

Inspection of Dwelling houses during the year:-

(1)(a) total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	21
(b) number of inspections made for the purpose	25

Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:-

number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority or their officers	4
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Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-

- (a) proceedings under Secs. 9 & 10 of the Housing Act, 1936:
number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices
were served requiring repairs -
- (b) proceedings under Public Health Acts:
number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices
were served requiring defects to be remedied -
- (c) proceedings under Secs. 11 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:
number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition
Orders were made -
- (d) Proceedings under Sec. 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:
number of separate tenements or underground rooms in
respect of which closing Orders were made -
- (e) Proceedings under Secs. 25 & 26:
number of Clearance Orders made -

Housing Act 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding

- (a) (1) number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the
year None
- (2) number of persons concerned in such cases -
- (b) (1) number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the
year 2
- (2) number of families dwelling therein 2
- (3) number of persons dwelling therein 18

Housing Act, 1949

number of houses for which applications for grants
have been received -

number of houses subject to grant -

number of houses owned by local authority which
have been the subject of a grant aid by the Ministry -

Moveable dwellings, Tents, Vans, etc.

number of site licences 2

number of individual licences 1

total number of caravans permitted under licences 13

number of inspections during the year - sites 3

dwellings 2

number of contraventions remedied 2

FOOD PREMISES

Bakehouses

number in district	2
number of inspections	6
number of contraventions	1
defects remedied	-

Milk Supplies

number of distributors on register	
Sterilized	3
Pasteurised	3
T.T.	3
N/D	1
number of samples of milk taken in course of delivery	-
number of inspections of dairy premises	6
contraventions remedied	1

Ice Cream

number of manufacturers on register	2
number of premises licenced for sale of ice cream	9
number of inspections of premises made	12
number of contraventions found	1
contraventions remedied	1
number of samples taken - Grade I	3
other grades	-

Meat Products

number of premises registered for manufacture of meat products	1
number of inspections made	3
number of contraventions found	1
contraventions remedied	1

Other food premises

number of inspections made	6
number of contraventions found	2
contraventions remedied	1

Slaughterhouses

number licensed - abattoir type	-
private (individual)	-
number operated by local authority	-

UNSOOUND FOOD

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole .
or in part Nil

Other condemned foods

91b. Miscellaneous Tinned Goods

Method of disposal - Incineration

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Closets

No. of houses with privy vaults in district	1
No. of houses with pail closets in district	9
No. of houses with water closets in district	623
No. of water closets substituted for pail closets or privy vaults	-

Cesspools and Septic Tanks

No. of cesspools and septic tanks emptied, cleansed etc.	1
No. of Cesspools and septic tanks abolished	-

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Details of areas or villages where provision has been made of new sewers or where existing sewage arrangements improved:-

New main drainage scheme commenced during the year involving re-sewerage of Stixwoud Road - Park View area.

Details of areas or villages where provision has been made of new sewage disposal facilities or existing arrangements improved:-

Improvement of ejector stations and improvements at Sewage Disposal Works involving, inter alia, provision of percolating filters, humus tank and sludge Drying beds. Scheme commenced.

Any part of district urgently requiring public sewers and/or treatment works for public health reasons:-

No.

WATER SUPPLIES

Domestic

No. of houses supplied from public mains - in house	628
- standpipe	5
No. of houses supplied from private sources	0
New sources of supply and location	0
No. of public supplies closed	0
Any part of district requiring public supply or replacement of public supply for public health reasons	No
No. of samples taken for chemical examination	Nil
No. of samples taken for bacteriological examination:-	
Class I - 11; Class II - 2; Class III - 2	

Swimming Pools

number of public swimming pools in operation	1
number fitted with continuous mechanical filtration and chlorination	1
number of samples of swimming pool water taken for chemical examination	-
number of samples of swimming pool water taken for bacteriological examination - satisfactory	3
unsatisfactory	-

GENERAL

Offensive Trades

number of premises in district	-
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Knackers Yards

number licensed	-
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Shops Act, 1950

number of shops inspected	12
contraventions remedied	-

Disinfection and disinfection

rooms or premises disinfected (a) infectious diseases	-
other than tuberculosis	-
(b) tuberculosis	-
number of premises subject to disinfection	-

Refuse collection and disposal

number of premises from which refuse is collected	661
frequency of collection	7 - 10 days
method of disposal	controlled tipping
is this satisfactory?	yes
is collection by L.A. or contract	L.A.

Nuisances

total number of nuisances during the year	
(1) abated as a result of informal action by Public Health Inspector	12
(2) Reported to Council	
Statutory notice issued	2
" " not issued	1

Details of nuisances abated

	After Informal intimation	After Statutory notice
Refuse	1	-
Foul ditches, ponds & stagnant water	-	-
Drainage	6	-
Poultry & Animals	1	-
Dangerous premises	1	-
Miscellaneous nuisances	3	-

Rats and Mice Destruction

No. of rodent operatives employed	1 - part time (without operative for part of year)
No. of premises treated - dwelling houses	12
other premises	4
Are there any serious reservoirs of rats in the district ?	No

Atmospheric pollution

No. of visits	None
No of nuisances found	None

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 & 1948

PART I of the Act - Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

Premises	Number on Register	Number of Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
i. factories in which secs. 1 - 4 & 6 are to be enforced by local authorities	1	6	-	-
ii. factories not included in (i) in which section 7 is enforced by the local authority	9	21	-	-
iii. other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the local authority	-	-	1	-
TOTAL	10	27	1	-

Cases in which defects were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were Found	Number of cases which remedied	Number of cases which prosecutions were instituted
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-
Inadequate Ventilation	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	-	-	-
Sanitary conveniences:-			
insufficient	-	-	-
unsuitable or defective	-	-	-
not separate for sexes	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act	2	1	-
TOTAL	2	1	-

